

“Pansies” Latest USPS Love, Floral Issue

The USPS combined three popular themes on April 22 in Kansas City, Missouri, when it issued a 44-cent, “Love: Pansies in a Basket” stamp. In addition to the obvious Love stamp series and Flowers on Stamps themes, for Art topicalists the stamp uses a detail from a watercolor created by the late Dorothy Maienschein, an employee of Hallmark Cards, Inc.

The design shows the image of a white woven cart filled with deep and light purple pansies and green foliage. Introduced as a Mother’s Day card in 1939, Hallmark reissued the design as a friendship card in 1941. Since Hallmark began tracking sales in 1942, almost 30 million cards with this pansy cart design have been purchased; more than any card in history.

The Hallmark website tells us the watercolor design was painted from a model of a small porcelain cart with real pansies. Although the card has been repainted, the original design has remained the same for 71 years. The pansy card is still on sale, and can be found wherever Hallmark products are sold.

The outside of the card reads: *To let you know I'm thinking of you.* Inside, the verse continues: *Pansies always stand for thoughts – at least that's what folks say. So this just comes to show my thoughts are there with you today.*

According to Hallmark research, “during Victorian times pansies were considered the ‘flowers of lovers,’ thought to be able to convey what sweethearts were thinking and wanted to say to each other, but could not.



To obtain first day cancellations, the usual rules apply. Send your covers with stamps affixed to Love: Pansies in a Basket Stamp, Postmaster, 300 W. Pershing Road, Kansas City, MO 64108-9998. All orders must be postmarked by June 22, 2010.

A digital color postmark also is available at a cost of \$1.50 (minimum 10 covers). Mail these request to the same address, with a second line reading “Digital Color Postmarks”. The Postal Service recommends acid free envelopes with side seams and requires no glue on the flap, no self-adhesive labels, and that two test envelopes be included. Allow 2" high by 4" wide for the cancel. Include a check, money order, or credit card info for payment. Hand-painted and other cacheted envelopes may not be accepted if they are not compatible with the digital color postmark equipment.

The stamps were gravure-printed by Avery Dennison and released in a pressure-sensitive pane of 20 stamps. Derry Noyes was the Stamp Designer, Art Director and Typographer, Trident was given the Engraver credit and Avery Dennison the Modeler credit. A total of 300 million stamps were issued. Plate numbers consist of the letter “V” for Avery Dennison followed by five single digits, one for each print color—cyan, magenta, yellow, black and PMS 526 (dark purple).